

Oldtimers Still Speak Of That Storm of 1898

(A local paper in an issue dated Dec. 3, 1898, published the following account of one of the most severe storms known in this area.—Ed.)

—The storm of last Sunday was felt all over Duxbury and especially so on the shore. The damage to individual parties was in no case very large unless in the case of Mr. Sanford Winsor whose boat house was demolished and who, it is reported, owned heavily in the schooner Juanita which was wrecked at Cohasset beach. Mr. J. A. Irwin, whose pecuniary loss will probably not exceed three hundred dollars, was greatly inconvenienced by the distribution of his lumber on other people's property.

The much discussed Mattakesett Court over which the County Commissioners and Mr. Irwin have been in controversy was opened up at one end by the tide breaking through the dyke and closed at the other by a falling tree. The water breaking through the dyke at this point caused a heavy overflow of the sea towards Washington street completely covering the streets in places. The cellar of W. S. Freeman's store was filled with water to within a few inches of the floor. The lumber from Irwin's wharf and boxes beating against the building rendered it unsafe and Mr. Arthur Arnold with much difficulty removed his family to a place of safety. Mrs. Arnold, overcome by the storm and exertions, fainting on the way. A large shed on Irwin's wharf was moved about 8 feet.

At King's hotel the roof of the barn was blown off and great patches of shingles torn off the main building. Ichabod Sampson lost a large section of fence and his house was injured to some extent. He places his loss at about sixty dollars. The Augustus Sampson house

was also slightly injured on the roof.

Brigg's stable was the scene of much excitement Sunday morning the tide fairly forcing him to make a hasty exit. The center rose so rapidly that he had to swim his horses to dry land. Mr. Briggs led two horses up to King's hotel, intending to stable them there, but just as he arrived the roof blew off knocking one of the horses down. One of Briggs' pigs was rescued in true western style by Joseph Nepton, who by means of a lasso, brought the drowning grunter to shore. The cow could not be induced to leave but stood in the barn calmly awaiting events that never came as when the tide went out the stable stood as sound as ever.

The sidewalk from the cable office to Blue River bridge was washed away. The row of bath houses at "Old Cove" was twisted all out of shape; some tipped over, some turned around, and some broke in two. Three large trees in Wm. Hancock's yard were blown over and a section of Lot Soule's fence was floated up to the flag staff in front of the Cable office.

At Powder Point many large trees were felled and Mr. Knapp's windmill demolished. At Point End, a portion of the roof of Reuben Peterson's house was blown off and the Davenport house partially injured. The Gurnet bridge stood the shock but the earth around the abutments was gullied out at each end. The beach at several places from Cut Island to the Gurnet is washed away and foot travel along the beach is impossible except at low tide as the Sand hills at these points are entirely gone. Nearly all of the gunning stands have been washed away.

The old "Pogy House" at the point was destroyed.

At Duxbury village many large trees were blown down. Richards' boat house with three boats in it was washed down the bay but were eventually recovered. Sanford Winsor's yacht "Scamper" was sunk in the bay but was also recovered.

J. M. Cushing's bath houses were destroyed. Riche's wharf and bath houses are gone. James Winsor's boat house and wharf were badly mixed up. Clarence Taylor's barn was blown over. W. J. Alden Jr. lost his windmill as did many others throughout the town.

At South Duxbury the bridge on Marshall street was carried away. The wharf at the Standish house destroyed, the top of Myles Standish spring was blown off, and the bottling establishment was nearly wrecked.

The barn at Mrs. Ann Winsor's was blown down, boat houses around Harden's hill were destroyed, Cal Smith's house was wholly destroyed and Seaver's wharf was washed away.

L. B. Sherman of Duxbury with a Mr. Worthen of Boston and Halsey Blake had a narrow escape at Sherman's gunning stand at the beach, and it was only by the most strenuous efforts and by deep wading that they were able to reach High Pines and safety. Mr. Paul Gifford and a friend also had to fight for their lives.

Will and Richard Connor, two brothers, with a man whose name is not known, were also taken unawares at their stand near the Plum Hills. They were obligated to leave their shanty and took to safety on a high bank. Here they stayed for three hours in the cold and storm clinging to a tree while every moment their ground grew smaller as the tide washed the sand away. At last the tide lowered and the chilled trio started for the Gurnet where they found warmth. Al Freeman's stand on the Standish Shore and Glover's stand as well as many others were carried away by the storm. It is estimated that it will cost the town at least one thousand dollars for repairs on the highway.